

We claim:

1. Apparatus for use by a station in a wireless communications environment wherein multiple channels are available for communication, comprising:

logic for receiving Announce messages from access points, the Announce messages indicating the access points' presence and protocol capability to the station;

logic for sending Bid messages to an access point to indicate that the station desires to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the access point;

receiving an Accept message from the access point in response to the Bid message, the Accept message indicating that the access point will allow the station to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the access point.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

logic for sending a registration request message to the access point to indicate that the station desires to communicate in the wireless communications environment via the access point using a particular protocol;

logic for receiving a registration acknowledge message from the access point in response to the Registration Request message, the registration acknowledge message indicating that the access point understands that the station will communicate in the wireless communications environment using the particular protocol.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein a Bid message is sent by the station to the access point if the station ascertains that the access point is likely to provide better

wireless communications performance than another access point through which the station is currently communicating.